

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 28-30, 32, 33, 37, 38, 116 and 131 have been amended as to matter of form without introducing any new subject matter. Claims 2, 3, 8, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 27, 34-36 are canceled without prejudice. In this manner, claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 28-30, 32, 33, 37, 38, 116 and 131 are pending in the present application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 131 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over the U. S. Patent 5,992,752 (“the Wilz reference”). The Examiner’s rejection of claim 131 is respectfully traversed. As amended, the method of claim 131 calls for receiving the bar codes selected by a group of users using the bar code readers; allowing the group of users to connect to the Internet portal in response to receiving the bar codes; permitting the group of users to communicate with each other through a common web page based on the information encoded in each bar code and based on the destination information corresponding to the received bar codes, wherein the destination information is accessible from the Internet portal.

The Examiner alleges that all the claimed features of claim 131 are taught by Wilz at figures 1-2, 4, 5, 7A-9, column 1 lines 45-54, column 2 lines 52-61, column 3 lines 15-46, column 4 lines 28-37, column 4 line 52- column 5 line 5, column 5 line 47 - column 6 line 16, column 6 lines 25-50, column 8 lines 15-26, column 10 lines 1-67, column 11 line 13- column 12 line 3, column 15 line 1 - column 16 line 65, column 17 line 35-column 18 line 18, column 25 line 64 - column 26 line 44, and column 33 lines 6-49).

However, the Wilz reference discloses a transaction system in which Internet addresses, in the form of URLs or Domain Name / Path Name are encoded in bar codes distributed to end-users. The sections relied upon by the Examiner teach that URL-encoded bar code symbols 8 printed on a Web-site Guide Book 13 are read to connect to the corresponding Web-sites thereof. See column 19, lines 56-60 in the Wilz reference.

As such, the Wilz reference at least does not teach or disclose permitting a group of users to communicate with each other through a common web page based on the information encoded in each bar code and based on the destination information corresponding to the received bar codes, wherein the destination information is accessible from the Internet portal. For this reason alone, the Applicants respectfully submit that claim 131 is not anticipated by the Wilz reference. Thus, the section 102 rejection of the amended independent claim 131 have been traversed and should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-6, 8-11, 13-25, 27-30, 32-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the Wilz reference in view of U. S. patent 6,199,048 (“the Hudetz reference”). Claim 1 is directed to a method for processing information. The cited references, considered either alone or in combination, do not teach one or more features of claim 1. For example, claim 1 refers to providing the data received by the remote device from a network location to the users of the bar code scanners based on the received source information. This feature is not taught or suggested by the Wilz and Hudetz references, considered either alone or in combination. Thus, for at least this reason, claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable. Similarly, independent claim 20 and its dependent claims are allowable.

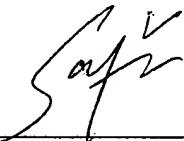
Finally, claim 116 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the Wilz reference in view of U. S. patent 5,979,762 (“the Bianco reference”). The Bianco reference discloses a system in which standard and encrypted bar codes can be used. The standard bar codes can be read by a standard bar code reader. However, the encrypted bar codes require a specialized security bar code decoder into which the user, for example, can enter a password to allow the bar code to be decrypted. The Examiner contends that it would have been obvious to use such a bar code with the system of the Wilz reference and that the combination would result in the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Among other things, claim 116 calls for a method of using bar codes having a prefix indicating whether the bar code is encrypted or not and includes the step of “connecting a user to a telephone number or an Internet portal when the bar code is read with a bar code reader depending upon whether the bar code is encrypted.” There is no teaching or suggestion in either the Wilz reference or the Bianco reference to connect to either the Internet portal or a telephone number depending on whether or not a scanned bar code had a prefix indicating whether or not the code was encrypted.

Moreover, absent a teaching or a specific hint or a motivation for transmitting information from the Internet portal to the user when the user connects to the Internet portal, in the Wilz and Bianco references, claim 116 is not rendered obvious in a *prima facie* manner to one of an ordinary skill in the art. Accordingly the rejection of claim 116, as being obvious over the Wilz reference in view of the Bianco reference, is improper and should be withdrawn. At least for the same reasons, reconsideration of rejection of claims depending from claim 116 is respectfully requested.

In view of these amendments and remarks, the application is now in condition for allowance and the Examiner's prompt action in accordance therewith is respectfully requested. For the aforementioned reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all claims pending in the present application are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (713) 934-4089 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,



Date: 02/02/05

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